

Amendments and Remarks
SN 09/998,685
Page 8 of 10

REMARKS

The amendments to the claims, along with the following remarks, are responsive to the Final Office Action mailed April 08, 2004. Claims 14 and 16 have been amended. Claims 1-13, 29 and 30 have been canceled. After entry of this amendment, claims 14-28 and 31 are pending.

The Applicants submit that the amendments to the claims are supported by the specification and claims as originally filed and do not introduce new matter.

Support for the amendment to claim 14 can be found at paragraph [0012].

Support for the amendment to claim 16 can be found at paragraph [0021].

Reconsideration of this application in view of the amendments made to the claims and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

The Examiner has objected to claims 6 and 15 stating that the phrase "the infrared dye has the formula of compounds I-V" is not an alternative expression and the scope of the claims is unclear. The Applicants assume that the Examiner intended to object to claim 16 of the present application. The Examiner has also objected to claim 14 stating that the phrase "a diazonium, iodonium, copper (I), alkoxypyridinium and maleimide additive or mixtures thereof" is not an alternative expression and the scope of the claim is unclear.

By this amendment, claim 6 has been canceled and claim 16 has been amended to replace the phrase "the infrared dye has the formula of compounds I-V" with "the infrared dye has the formula of compounds I, II, III, IV and V." Accordingly, claim 16 is now in condition for allowance. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the objection and allow claim 16.

Claim 14 has been amended to include the phrase "a diazonium, iodonium, copper (I), alkoxypyridinium, maleimide additive or mixtures thereof." Accordingly, claim 14 is now also in condition for allowance. Furthermore, because claims 15-28 depend from an

Amendments and Remarks
SN 09/998,685
Page 9 of 10

allowable independent claim, they are also in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the objection and allow claims 14-28.

CLAIM REJECTIONS- 35 USC § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-13, 29 and 30 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 5,985,514 to Zheng et al. (Zheng) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,506,090 to Gardner, Jr. et al. (Gardner).

By this amendment, claims 1-13, 29 and 30 have been canceled. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection.

ALLOWED CLAIMS

The Examiner has allowed claim 31. The Applicants respectfully acknowledge the allowance of this claim.

Amendments and Remarks
SN 09/998,685
Page 10 of 10

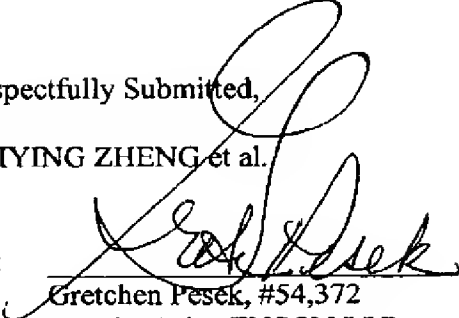
CONCLUSION

All pending claims are in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Dated: June 7, 2004

M2:20621612.01